

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6105

INFO USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINT GW

SUBJECT: STATE OF THE (ENTIRE GERMAN) NATION

BEGIN SUMMARY. IN HIS STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS
JANUARY 29, CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT DEFENDED THE GOVERNMENT'S
DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICIES AND CALLED FOR SUPPORT
OF THE POLISH AGREEMENTS. HIS SPEECH WAS CLEARLY
DESIGNED TO PROJECT THE IMAGE OF A STRONG AND SKILLFUL
LEADER PREPARED TO COPE WITH WHATEVER PROBLEMS MIGHT
LIE AHEAD FOR THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC. THE PRINCIPAL
SPEAKER FOR THE OPPOSITION, CDU/CSU FRAKTION CHAIRMAN
CARSTENS, ATTEMPTED TO SHATTER SCHMIDT'S STATESMAN
IMAGE AND TO PORTRAY THE GOVERNMENT AS INEFFECTIVE AND
INTELLECTUALLY DISHONEST. ALL THIS IS PAR FOR THE
COURSE IN A GERMAN ELECTION YEAR. ALTHOUGH THE TONE
OF THE DEBATE WAS SHARP, IT WAS NOT AS ACRIMONIOUS AS
SOME PAST DEBATES IN THE BUNDESTAG. THE
"MODERATION" MAY BE A PLOY BY THE GOVERNMENT TO OBTAIN
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SUPPORT FOR THE POLISH PENSION AGREEMENT IN THE

BUNDES RAT. END SUMMARY.

1. WHILE COVERING THE ENTIRE RANGE OF FRG DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICY, THE CHANCELLOR'S MESSAGE WAS PRIMARILY A REPORT ON THE GOVERNMENT VIEW OF THE ENTIRE GERMAN NATION, NOT JUST THE WEST GERMAN STATE. HE VIGOROUSLY DEFENDED THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S INNER-GERMAN POLICY AND OSTPOLITIK AND GAVE A FIRM ENDORSEMENT OF DETENTE.

2. IN ATTACKING CDU/CSU CRITICS OF HIS POLICIES, THE CHANCELLOR INVOKED THE POLICIES OF ADENAUER, ERHARD, AND KIESINGER TO EMPHASIZE THE CONTINUITY OF THE FRG'S POLICY TOWARD ITS EASTERN NEIGHBORS. HE REJECTED CRITICISMS OF THE GOVERNMENT'S DEFENSE POLICIES AND CHARACTERIZED THE OPINIONS EXPRESSED BY CDU SECRETARY GENERAL BIEDENKOPF AS THOSE OF AN "AMATEUR" WHO HAD NEVER SEEN THE INSIDE OF A PARLIAMENT.

3. SCHMIDT ASSERTED THAT "WE ARE STICKING TO THE POLICY OF DETENTE"; TO DO OTHERWISE WOULD MEAN "ABANDONING THE HOPE FOR A CHANGE IN OUR NATIONAL DESTINY." IT WOULD ALSO THREATEN "NEW DANGERS AROUND BERLIN." SCHMIDT CAME DOWN HARD ON THE CDU PROPOSAL OF LAST JUNE THAT THE FRG NOT ATTEND THE CSCE SUMMIT IN HELSINKI. HE SAID THIS WOULD HAVE ISOLATED THE FRG NOT ONLY FROM ITS ALLIES AND EUROPE BUT FROM THE WHOLE WORLD.

4. SCHMIDT STRESSED THE NEED FOR CONCRETE ACHIEVEMENTS IN INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS: SLOGANS AND SPEECHES WERE NOT ENOUGH. IF THE CDU/CSU THOUGHT THE FRG HAD "TRUMP CARDS" THAT WOULD FORCE THE EAST GERMANS TO DO SOMETHING THEY DID NOT WANT TO DO, IT SHOULD REVEAL THEM AND NOT SIMPLY MOAN THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT REFUSED TO USE (NON-EXISTENT) LEVERAGE.

5. THE CHANCELLOR DEVOTED CONSIDERABLE TIME TO JUSTIFYING THE SIZEABLE FINANCIAL COMPONENT OF THE FRG'S AGREEMENTS WITH ITS EASTERN NEIGHBORS. HE CHIDED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CRITICS WHO LOOKED ONLY AT THE MONEY ASPECT OR WHO ENGAGED IN "NARROW-MINDED COMPARISONS" OF THE RESPECTIVE CONCESSIONS OF THE STATES CONCERNED. WHAT WAS IMPORTANT WAS NOT MONEY BUT PEOPLE. THE GOVERNMENT FOLLOWED A POLICY OF "MITIGATING THE HARDSHIPS OF PARTITION THROUGH HUMAN ALLEVIATIONS;" NEITHER THE FRG TAXPAYER NOR PREVIOUS GOVERNMENTS HAD EVER BEEN STINTING IN THEIR EFFORTS TOWARD THAT END. REAL

IMPROVEMENTS -- BETTER TRANSIT ROUTES TO BERLIN, FOR
EXAMPLE -- COST MONEY.

6. IN THIS VEIN SCHMIDT ALSO DEFENDED THE HIGH COST
OF THE POLISH AGREEMENTS. HE APPEALED TO THE EMOTIONS
OF THE OPPOSITION BY ASKING IF IT WISHED TO BLOCK THE
EMIGRATION OF 125,000 GERMANS TO GERMANY. RECALLING

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THAT THE FRG HAD ALREADY PAID DM 97 BILLION IN FUL-
FILLMENT OF THE "NATIONAL TASK" OF RESETTLING REFUGEES
AND EXPELLEES, HE IMPLIED THAT THE OPPOSITION HAD LOST
ITS SENSE OF PROPORTION IN OBJECTING TO THE PRICE TAG
ON THE POLISH AGREEMENTS.

7. SCHMIDT FURTHERMORE CLAIMED THAT DEFEAT OF THE
POLISH AGREEMENTS WOULD DAMAGE FRG FOREIGN POLICY

CREDIBILITY IN BOTH EAST AND WEST. HE CALLED ON KOHL TO STATE CLEARLY WHETHER THE OPPOSITION INTENDED TO BLOCK RATIFICATION OF THE AGREEMENTS IN THE BUNDESRAT.

8. THE CHANCELLOR SEVERAL TIMES ACKNOWLEDGED THE IMPORTANCE OF COORDINATING EASTERN POLICY WITH THE FRG'S ALLIES AND, PARTICULARLY, WITH THE THREE WESTERN POWERS "WHOSE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR BERLIN AND GERMANY AS A WHOLE CONTINUE TO EXIST." (COMMENT: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THIS STATEMENT MAY HAVE BEEN INSERTED BECAUSE OF RECENT OPPOSITION ATTACKS WHICH WERE STIMULATED BY PRESS ALLEGATIONS OF ALLIED DISSATISFACTION WITH THE STATE OF CONSULTATIONS ON THE DECEMBER TRANSIT AGREEMENTS. SCHMIDT ALSO NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT WHILE THE ALLIES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE STATUS AND SECURITY OF BERLIN, IT IS "OUR OWN AFFAIR TO LOOK AFTER THE MAINTENANCE AND STRENGTHENING OF THE TIES CONNECTING IT WITH US." THAT FORMULATION IS UNDERSTANDABLE IN THE CONTEXT IN WHICH IT WAS MADE, A REMINDER TO THE OPPOSITION THAT ONLY FRG MONEY WILL BRING ABOUT REAL IMPROVEMENTS IN BERLIN. IT ALSO RAISES AN INTERESTING QUESTION, HOWEVER, ABOUT THE CHANCELLOR'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE EXTENT TO WHICH CONSULTATIONS ARE NEEDED ON MATTERS RELATED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FRG-BERLIN TIES. END COMMENT.

9. THREE SPECIFIC ISSUES IN FRG/GDR RELATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN THE OBJECT OF CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION OF LATE DREW COMMENTS FROM THE CHANCELLOR:

-- HE SAID HE "HAD THE IMPRESSION" THAT THE FORCED ADOPTIONS SITUATION WAS "BEING RECTIFIED."

-- WITH REGARD TO THE SCHUBERT EXFILTRATION TRIAL (BONN 1585), HE CATEGORICALLY DENIED THAT SCHUBERT HAD ENGAGED IN ANY ESPIONAGE ON BEHALF OF THE FRG. IN ADDITION, HE REVEALED THAT CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS AGAINST SCHUBERT WERE ALSO UNDER WAY IN THE FRG FOR A VARIETY OF SUSPECTED FELONIES.

-- HE REJECTED DEMANDS THAT THE GOVERNMENT RETALIATE IN KIND FOR THE EAST GERMAN EXPULSION OF A "DER SPIEGEL" CORRESPONDENT BY STATING THAT "WE JUST DO NOT EXPEL A GERMAN FROM GERMANY."

10. FOLLOWING SCHMIDT'S SPEECH, CDU/CSU FRATION CHAIRMAN CARSTENS GAVE A SLASHING REBUTTAL. HE ACCUSED THE CHANCELLOR OF TRYING TO PUT A GOOD FACE ON A BAD

ECONOMIC SITUATION, PARTICULARLY UNEMPLOYMENT, AND
CLAIMED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD NOT DONE ENOUGH TO
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OVERCOME THE PROBLEMS. CARSTENS DENIED THAT THE UNION
PARTIES WERE ANTI-SOVIET OR ANTI-POLISH. BUT, HE
SAID, THE GERMAN PUBLIC "IS FED UP ONCE AND FOR ALL WITH
BEING DRAGGED INTO THE SEMI-DARKNESS OF SOCIAL
DEMOCRATIC OSTPOLITIK AND INTO AN OBSURE
RAPPROCHEMENT WITH COMMUNIST PARTIES IN WESTERN EUROPE."
CARSTENS ALSO HAD SOME HARSH WORDS TO SAY ABOUT FOREIGN
MINISTER GENSCHER'S FDP, WHICH HE DEPICTED AS AN ERRAND-
BOY OF THE SPD.

11. IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT THE STATE OF THE NATION DEBATE
TOOK PLACE IN A FEDERAL ELECTION YEAR. HOWEVER, SOME
OBSERVERS FEEL THAT THE GOVERNMENT HELD BACK A BIT ON
THE ATTACK AGAINST THE OPPOSITION IN THE HOPE OF PICKING
UP CDU SUPPORT IN THE BUNDESRAT FOR THE POLISH
PENSION AGREEMENT. SOME CDU SUPPORTERS FEEL THAT
CARSTENS WENT TOO FAR IN HIS REBUTTAL AND PROBABLY
LOST SOME VOTES FOR THE UNION PARTIES IN NEXT
OCTOBER'S BUNDESTAG ELECTIONS.

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